

They were preparing to participate in the Arctic Thunder air show—an open house at Elmendorf Air Force base that draws hundreds of thousands of Alaskans, which was scheduled for last weekend.

After consulting with the families, the Air Force decided that Arctic Thunder would go on as scheduled. Alaskans rewarded that decision with a recordbreaking turnout. About 200,000 Alaskans came out to the base. Many stopped to pay their respects to the crew of Sitka 43 at a makeshift memorial erected next to a static display of a C-17 aircraft.

They were guardsmen, airmen, wingmen, leaders, and warriors. But above all else that they were aviators. This fact was driven home to all of us at Monday's memorial service by a poster erected between the photos of our fallen airmen and the memorial wreathes. That poster read, "To most people the sky's the limit. To those who love aviation the sky is home."

On behalf of all of our Senate colleagues, I extend our Nation's gratitude to the crew of Sitka 43. To their loved ones and to their Air Force colleagues, we extend our deepest sympathies.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SIMON "CY" V. AVARA

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I pay special tribute to Simon "Cy" Avara on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his business, the Avara International Academy of Hair Design and Technology.

Cy was born in Baltimore where his parents, Vincent and Mary, were working-class Italian Americans. Cy grew up watching his father work as a neighborhood barber. When Cy was 14 years old his father died in a tragic car accident. He decided to follow in his father's footsteps and, after a period of apprenticeship, he passed the Maryland State Board Barber's exam. At age 16, he opened up his own barbershop, charging 60 cents for a man's haircut.

He closed the barber shop for 2 years when he was drafted and served with the U.S. Army in Korea. After the war, Cy returned to Baltimore to establish an upscale salon to showcase his barbering talents. But his real satisfaction came from teaching others how to cut and style hair. He enjoyed helping others develop a skill that they could use throughout their lives to support themselves and their families. In 1960, he opened the Avara International Academy of Hair Design and Technology in his southwest Baltimore neighborhood. His school was so successful that he was able to acquire another school in Dundalk, Baltimore County, 10 years later.

Cy has been recognized as a leader in his profession and he has used his knowledge of the industry to advocate

for barbers and stylists. He has served in several posts over the course of his career, including secretary-treasurer of the International Barber School Association, national president of Barber Examiners, and founder and chairman of the Maryland Hair Designers Association. But most important, while the southwest Baltimore and Dundalk neighborhoods have fallen on hard times, the Avara International Academy of Hair Design and Technology has remained as a beacon of hope and opportunity.

As a child, Cy was raised to appreciate his blessings and to help others who were less fortunate. His father gave haircuts to people who wanted to make a good impression so they could get a job; his mother gave out food to those in need in their neighborhood. Cy never forgot these lessons in generosity. For more than 40 years, he has been deeply involved with St. Vincent's Center for Abused and Neglected Children, regularly sending his barber students to cut the children's hair. He has also been a major contributor to the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation, which was started by one of his former barber students, Sam Lamantia, to honor professional football players who have overcome adversity and contributed to the betterment of their community.

On August 29, 2010, Cy will hold a Cut-A-Thon fundraiser to celebrate his special anniversary. The proceeds from the event will benefit the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation which supports the St. Vincent Center for Abused and Neglected Children.

I urge my colleagues to join me today to salute Simon "Cy" Avara; his wife Rita; his sons Michael Thomas, and Lawrence; and his daughter Susan in celebration of their achievements as humanitarians and entrepreneurs on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Avara International Academy of Hair Design and Technology.●

TRIBUTE TO KAY SIGGINS

• Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I greatly appreciate having this opportunity to bring to the Senate's attention a remarkable citizen of Wyoming and the United States on the occasion of her 107th birthday. Her name is Kay Siggins, and she is a resident of Cody, WY.

Over the years, Kay has seen it all—the beginnings of aviation, the introduction of the automobile to everyday life, the Great Depression, two World Wars, the birth of the computer, the advent of television, the evolution of radio, the start of the space program, the landing on the Moon, and so much more. In a very real sense, for all she has seen and done, she is a walking history book.

The great adventure of Kay's life began when she was born on August 12, 1903, in Medford, MA. After she had completed her school years, she took a

job in the State's education system and soon became her school's acting principal, in charge of the education of about 3,000 students. It was right around then that she and a friend traveled west to stay as a guest at the Triangle X Dude Ranch in Wyoming. I believe that must have been the start of her great affection and regard for the West and Wyoming, for in the years to come she would often return there to visit and enjoy all that the West has to offer.

Then, with the 1940s, the winds of war began to blow. Kay decided to join the Navy. She became a commissioned officer and was soon placed in charge of the WAVES Boot Camp. Later, as a lieutenant, she was assigned to the Great Lakes Naval Training Center and placed in charge of the Center's WAVES barracks. She stayed on Active Duty for several years, after which she joined the Reserves. She continued to serve in that capacity until she retired with the rank of commander.

Anyone else would have been satisfied to call it a career at that point but not Kay. She was just getting started. Kay decided that the time had come to head West and see what life was like out there. Unfortunately, she must have had a problem with her compass for she wound up not in Wyoming but in Green Valley, AZ, where she made her home.

Actually, Green Valley was more of her home base as she pursued her goal of visiting all the States. It seemed that she was always on the road heading to points north, south, east, or west. She would get her motor home ready, hop aboard, and hit the highway. It wasn't long before she had seen every State that way but Hawaii. She eventually made it there too. She also headed up north to visit Alaska not once but twice, just to experience what life was like up there.

As the years continued to roll by, I have to think that the urge to come home to Wyoming and relive those days on the Dude ranch was just too strong. She was a young 70ish lady and full of adventure and a love of life. She caught the eye of Raymond Siggins, who lived there, and they were soon married.

A check of the records shows that Kay is now believed to be the oldest female military veteran in America, the senior statesman of our Armed Forces. She may be the oldest veteran in terms of age, but she is the youngest in spirit—and she will always be so. That is why Kay has always been so successful. She has always led the best way—by example—at everything she did, and because that is the way she lived her life, she was able to blaze a trail and leave a path for others to follow.

There are always lessons we can learn from how someone else has lived their life. Kay has taught us all the wisdom of the old adage attributed to Abraham Lincoln: It is not the years in your life, it is the life in your years. For Kay, both have been extraordinary.

I have often said that there is something magical about living in Wyoming. The way I see it, although Kay is celebrating her 107th birthday, since she moved to Wyoming when she was in her seventies, she is only in her thirties in Wyoming years.

Happy Birthday, Kay. Wyoming couldn't be more proud of you. Because of you and your service for so many years of a very wonderful and productive life, our Nation is a much better place to live—from coast to coast. You have made a difference wherever you have been, and we hope you continue to enjoy every day of your life in Wyoming.●

RECOGNIZING ECCO, INC.

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I recognize ECCO, Inc., a wonderful organization based in Madison, SD, that provides support services for people with disabilities. ECCO has steadily grown in the last 35 years to become a thriving center for employment and housing assistance.

In its beginning, the organization was a day program serving four individuals; however, with hard work and a devotion to serving others, ECCO has grown dramatically. Currently it is able to provide a 24-hour support staff to individuals throughout the community. ECCO's 91 full-time and part-time employees work to see that all individuals are able to maintain their independence. Sixty-eight people receive services from ECCO, and half of those live in ECCO housing. With three group homes and an apartment building, ECCO strives to make sure all citizens are able to have their own lives.

To celebrate reaching its 35th anniversary, ECCO will have an open house August 6 with tours of the main building. I am proud to recognize this organization and all the people who have made it a success. The goals of ECCO are praiseworthy, and I am thankful we have such a wonderful organization serving the Madison area.●

REMEMBERING ROBERT HICKS

● Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, it brings me great sadness that I come to the Senate floor today to reflect upon the passing of Robert Hicks, a lion in the Louisiana civil rights movement whose legal victories helped topple segregation in Bogalusa and change discriminatory employment practices throughout the South, passed away Tuesday, April 13, in his home at the age of 81.

Born in Mississippi, but moved to Bogalusa at a young age, Robert Hicks was the youngest of three children born to Quitman and Maybell Hicks in 1929. He graduated from Central Memorial High School, where he played on the school's State champion football team. He later played offensive guard on The Bushmen, an all-Black semipro team.

Mr. Hicks began his civil rights work as a member of the local NAACP before

working with the Voter and Civic League. He helped organize daily marches to protest racial discrimination by merchants and city government in a crusade that thrust Bogalusa into the national spotlight. The Hicks family opened their home to White civil rights workers and national figures. Because of this, the family was targeted by the Ku Klux Klan, which in turn motivated the formation of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, an armed band of African-American men who stood guard at the Hicks' home and protected civil rights workers in the city. The 2003 Showtime movie "Deacons of Defense" was loosely based on the group.

As fellow civil rights worker Peter Jan Honigsberg wrote in his memoir recalling his experience volunteering in Bogalusa in the summers of 1966 and 1967 about Hicks, "Even today I still think of him . . . He was determined to do what he had to do to change the South." Mr. Hicks filed a landmark lawsuit against the city and police department of Bogalusa, obtaining a Federal court order requiring the police to protect protest marchers, and a lawsuit that overturned officials' refusal to allow protest marchers. In 1967, Mr. Hicks filed a suit against the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing, which resulted in the prohibition of the construction of public housing in segregated neighborhoods in Bogalusa.

Mr. Hicks began working at Crown Zellerbach, the local paper mill, at a time when few Black people were employed there and eventually he served as president of the Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers. After fighting Crown Zellerbach for years in Federal court, Mr. Hicks became the company's first African-American supervisor, a position he held until his retirement.

Mr. Hicks and his wife Valeria had six children during their 62-year union. With his wife, Mr. Hicks traveled the country, spreading the word about the conditions for Black people in the South and encouraging people to travel to Bogalusa and other Southern cities to campaign for civil rights. Besides his wife, thoughts and prayers go out to his survivors, including a daughter, Barbara Maria Hicks; three sons, Robert Lawrence, Gregory Vince, and Darryl Hicks; a sister, Grace Berry; 17 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren. The work of Robert Hicks will be forever remembered by the Bogalusa community, which is renaming a street and holding a ceremony in his honor.●

2010 CAVE CITY WATERMELON FESTIVAL

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate the residents of Cave City in my home State of Arkansas as they celebrate the annual Cave City Watermelon Festival, a time-honored tradition that commemorates watermelon growing and its importance to the local community.

Home to the "world's best watermelons," Cave City is a close-knit community located in Northern Arkansas. Since the 1930s, Cave City residents and other Arkansans have gathered to take part in the Watermelon Festival.

Sponsored by the Cave City Area Chamber of Commerce, this year's event will take place August 12-14 and will feature a variety of music, games, a parade, and a beauty pageant.

Mr. President, I salute the entire community of Cave City as they celebrate this annual event. I commend them for keeping the history and heritage of their community alive.●

2010 HOPE WATERMELON FESTIVAL

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate the residents of Hope in my home State of Arkansas as they celebrate the annual Hope Watermelon Festival, a time-honored tradition that commemorates the history and technique of watermelon growing and its importance to the local community.

Home to the world's largest watermelon, Hope is a thriving community in southwest Arkansas. Since the 1920s, Hope residents and other Arkansans have gathered to take part in the Watermelon Festival.

According to event organizers, the early Watermelon Festivals bear little resemblance to those in recent years. During the 1920s era, citizens served ice-cold watermelon to passengers on the many trains that stopped in Hope. These early festivals brought upwards of 20,000 people in a day to Hope. The end to the first festivals came around 1931 when the city, suffering from the effects of the Depression, could no longer accommodate the crowds.

In 1975, the city of Hope celebrated its centennial anniversary, which prompted local residents to consider staging the Watermelon Festival once again. Since the 1970s, the festival has continued to grow, attracting approximately 50,000 visitors to Hope over a 4-day period each year.

I am looking forward to attending this year's Watermelon Festival, which will take place August 12-14 at Fair Parkin Hope. Sponsored by the Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce, this year's event features southwest Arkansas's largest arts and crafts show, live music, a 5K run/walk, games and children's activities, food, an antique car show, and of course, ice-cold Hope watermelon by the slice.

Mr. President, I salute the entire community of Hope and Hempstead County as they celebrate this annual event and enjoy "a slice of the good life." I commend them for keeping the history and heritage of their community alive.●

HUMANE SOCIETY OF PULASKI COUNTY

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate staff members and volunteers of the Humane Society of Pulaski County as they celebrate the 10-